

Coins

Gold price dividends

By Roger Boye

HERE ARE THE answers to some questions received recently from Tribune readers:

Q — What effect does the rising price of gold have on the value of our gold coin collection? We've got five South African Krugerrands and nine United States gold coins in various denominations. — H.R., Chicago.

A — The one-ounce Krugerrand is the best known "bullion gold coin," valuable strictly for its gold content, not as a collector's item. Its price depends entirely on the price of gold; dealers sell the coin for about \$10 over the latest London quotation for an ounce of gold bullion.

On the other hand, U.S. gold coins made from 1795 to 1933 are valuable primarily as collector's items; the rising price of gold has had a relatively minor influence on their retail sale value.

Q — I read your article about the 1913 nickel that sold for \$200,000. I

have a Liberty nickel made 10 years before that and would like to sell it (my rent problems are staggering). How much is it worth to a collector?

— M.S., Evanston.

A — Sorry, but a 1903 nickel is rather common. Dealers sell the coin for about 60 cents in good condition; \$1 in very good condition.

Q — We have two fascinating pieces of Confederate currency (the bills are described in detail). It is rumored that both have passed through several generations in our family. Do you think they might be valuable? — N.T., Avon, Ill.

A — Most likely, no. Thousands of fake Confederate bills have been printed over the years, most on crinkled, yellow paper to make them look old. Both of your bills are on a list compiled by the editors of Coin World of the most common fakes. Although they are probably worthless imitations, you should have your bills examined by an expert to be sure.